



# Evaluation for the real world: The impact of evidence in policy making

By Paul Thomas, Colin Palfrey, Ceri Phillips

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Evaluation research findings should be a key element of the policy-making process, yet in reality they are often disregarded. This valuable book examines the development of evaluation and its impact on public policy by analysing evaluation frameworks and criteria which are available when evaluating public policies and services. It further examines the nature of evidence and its use and non-use by decision-makers and assesses the work of influential academics in the USA and UK in the context of evaluation and policy making. The book emphasises the 'real world' of decision-makers in the public sector and recognises how political demands and economic pressures can affect the decisions of those who commission evaluation research while providing recommendations for policymakers on adopting a different approach to evaluation. This is essential reading for under-graduate and post-graduate students of policy analysis and public sector management, and those who are involved in the planning and evaluation of public policies and services.

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### Review

“Provides a careful, comprehensive, and detailed history of the field . . . targeted at policy and public sector management students, academics, and practitioners”

*(People, Place and Policy)*

“This book provides a critical and long overdue analysis of the contribution of decades of evaluation research to policy making. The text is concise, comprehensive, objective, and eminently readable.”

*(Philip Jacobs University of Alberta and the Institute of Health Economics 2012-03-08)*

### About the Author

**Colin Palfrey** has worked for a number of local UK authorities and several universities. **Paul Thomas** is an honorary research fellow at Swansea University, and he chairs two multi-agency working groups on public involvement in decision-making. **Ceri Phillips** is professor of health economics and head of research at the School of Human and Health Sciences at Swansea University. Together the three are coauthors of *Policy Evaluation in the Public Sector* and *Evaluating Health and Social Care*.

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